

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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USMISSION USEC BRUSSELS

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEC EI GR

SUBJ: IRISH ATTITUDE TOWARD EC COMMISSION REPORT ON GREEK ACCESSION

1. DURING DISCUSSION ON OTHER SUBJECTS WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY SECRETARY PAUL KEATING (NO. TWO MAN IN FONOFF), EMBOFF INQUIRED ABOUT GOI REACTION TO EC COMMISSION REPORT ON GREEK ACCESSION AND RESULTANT PRESS FLURRY. KEATING SAID THAT, IN PRINCIPLE, THE IRISH HAD NO PROBLEMS WITH GREEK PROGRESS TOWARD FULL MEMBERSHIP. "GREECE WAS ATLEAST AS ABLE AS IRELAND TO BEAR THE BURDEN OF EC MEMBERSHIP." THE QUESTION, HE OBSERVED, IS WHETHER THE EC,

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ALREADY UNDER CONSIDERABLE INTERNAL STRAIN, COULD STAND ANOTHER

MEMBER WITH ANOTHER SET OF PROBLEMS. "... ANOTHER BABY TUGGING AT ITS APRON STRINGS."

2. KEATING ADDED THAT THE TIMING OF THE GREEK REQUEST WAS BAD, THROUGH NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN: THE TINDEMANN'S REPORT RAISED QUESTIONS THAT HAVE TO BE ANSWERED; SPAIN AND PORTUGAL STAND IN THE WINGS; IMMEDIATE GREEK ACCESSION WOULD BRING WITH IT SERIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS THAT THE COMMUNITY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO HANDLE, "LET ALONE PROBLEMS LIKE CYPRUS."

3. COMMENT: IN SHORT, WHILE MAKING SYMPATHETIC NOISES TOWARD GREEK ACCESSION, IRELAND IS LIKELY TO EMBRACE THE VIEW THAT THE COMMUNITY HAS NOT YET COME TO GRIPS WITH PROBLEMS AND INEQUITIES IN ITS EXISTING STRUCTURE AND THAT TAKING GREECE ON BOARD REPIDLY WOULD NOT BE IN EITHER THE COMMUNITY'S OR GREECE'S BEST INTEREST. ALSO, FROM SELF-INTEREST THE IRISH WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO BRING IN ANOTHER STATE WHICH WOULD COMPETE FOR CURRENTLY SCARCE DEVELOPMENT FUNDS. CURLEY

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